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C O N F I D E N T I A L LJUBLJANA 000152

SIPDIS

FOR EUR/NCE, EUR/RPM (HOLTZ), EUR/ERA AND EUR/SCE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SI](#) [HR](#) [OSCE](#) [KO](#) [RU](#)

SUBJECT: KOSOVO/WESTERN BALKANS, CROATIA'S EU ACCESSION,  
OSCE AND PROPOSED JANSJA VISIT TO WASHINGTON FEATURE  
PROMINENTLY IN EUR/NCE DIRECTOR GARVEY'S MEETINGS IN  
LJUBLJANA

Classified By: Dean J. Haas, DCM, for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: EUR/NCE Director Janet Garvey held a series of meetings in Ljubljana 4 March with key Slovenian interlocuters. Issues raised included:

- Slovenia's interest in working toward a final agreement on Kosovo this year;
- the priority Slovenia places on its relationships with its Southeastern European neighbors and their efforts to join EU and NATO;
- Slovenia's OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office and the way forward with the Russians;
- Slovenia's path toward adoption of the Euro and managing a Schengen border; and,
- the importance of getting Prime Minister Jansa to Washington for a meeting with President Bush this fall.

Garvey also heard a spirited read-out from former FM (now Presidential advisor) Vajgl on his meeting that morning with the Croatian Ambassador on his country's efforts to meet EU demands for the turnover of Ante Gotovina prior to the formal start of accession negotiations 17 March. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) Janet Garvey, EUR/NCE Office Director, visited Ljubljana 3-4 March to familiarize herself with Embassy operations and personnel and to meet with key Slovene players to discuss bilateral relations and Slovenian foreign policy priorities. On 4 March, Garvey met with the following officials:

- Andrej Logar, MFA Director General (Acting), Bilateral and EU Affairs
- Marija Adanja, State Undersecretary, MFA EU Office
- Boris Frlec, Chair, MFA OSCE Task Force
- Borut Mahnic, State Undersecretary, MFA Security Policy Division (NATO)
- Andrej Rahten, Chief International Affairs Advisor to PM Jansa
- Ivo Vajgl and Melita Gabric, International Affairs Advisors to President Drnovsek
- Vojislav Suc, MFA State Undersecretary for North and Latin America

3. (C) Garvey's Slovene interlocuters presented a fairly united front on a handful of issues, including Kosovo, the western Balkans, OSCE and PM Jansa's desire to visit Washington in the fall. The only "curveball" came in her meeting with President Drnovsek's foreign policy team when former FM Ivo Vajgl gave a rather blunt readout of a meeting he had just come from with the Croatian Ambassador to Slovenia on the upcoming date for the start of EU accession negotiations and the requirement that "full cooperation" with the ICTY meant turning over Ante Gotovina to The Hague tribunal. (see para 6)

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KOSOVO  
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4. (C) Acting DG Logar told Garvey that the U.S. is seen favorably in Kosovo and suggested that it needed to take advantage of this positive sentiment emanating from a largely Muslim population, particularly given anti-U.S. feelings among Muslims elsewhere in the world. Slovenia's policy on Kosovo is that there is no going back to pre-1999 conditions, and that no partition of Kosovo is acceptable nor is any attachment of it to another country. Logar mentioned EUR DAS Kathy Stephens' upcoming trip to Prague and Budapest to discuss Kosovo and urged Garvey to suggest that Stephens make a stop in Ljubljana as well. Frlec, the OSCE TF Chief, called Kosovo "a ticking bomb" that should not be forgotten and outlined Slovenia's efforts in the OSCE context to work on the issue. Presidential Advisor Gabric termed U.S. involvement "important" in Kosovo and throughout southeastern Europe because the countries involved "understand what is backing the words of the Americans." (COMMENT: We suspect Kosovo was high on FM Rupel's list of talking points for his 7 March meeting with the Secretary. END COMMENT.)

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CROATIA'S EU ACCESSION  
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15. (C) Logar told Garvey that Slovenia would like to see Croatia in the EU as soon as possible, however, "full cooperation" with the ICTY is a critical pre-condition and "full cooperation means full cooperation," and Gotovina must be turned over first. If this does not happen, the wrong signal will be sent to other states seeking to join the EU and NATO. Logar said that 17 March is a "flexible date" to begin accession negotiations with Croatia. The Luxembourg Presidency has floated the idea of postponing the start of negotiations to 22 June, according to Logar.

16. (C) Vajgl entered his meeting with Garvey late and was clearly worked up over the meeting he had just come from during which the Croatian Ambassador to Slovenia had presented to Vajgl a letter for President Drnovsek co-signed by the "three Presidents" of Croatia (State, Government, Parliament). According to Vajgl, the letter restated Croatia's commitment to cooperating with the ICTY and to surrendering Gotovina, but also asked in strong terms that the accession negotiations begin on 17 March. Vajgl told Garvey that he had taken advantage of the meeting to give the Croatian Ambassador some "advice." Vajgl said he told the Ambassador the Croatians were showing "too much self confidence", something Slovenia had been accused of in its own NATO and EU accession processes, but that Croatia was far worse than Slovenia ever was. "It is in their mentality." Vajgl continued, "it is pride." Vajgl conceded that there is "85 percent opposition in Croatia to giving up Gotovina." He said that Croatia is "trying to set the conditions" rather than respect those which have been set for it. Vajgl's counterpart, Melita Gabric, who had not attended the meeting with the Croatian Ambassador, seemed to want to spin Vajgl's comments a bit more diplomatically when she interjected, "the culture of compromise is not widespread in the Balkans." She added, "we do support Croatia but (it) must meet the EU criteria." She reluctantly concluded, however, that "Croatia (often) sells more form than substance."

17. (C) In her meeting with Garvey, EU Office Director Adanja (who is quickly becoming one of the Embassy's most reliable, well-briefed, articulate and cordial contacts) sagely noted that "Croatia seems to prefer advice from others besides Slovenia." She reiterated, though, that there is close cooperation between the two countries and that it is in Slovenia's national interests to see the EU accession process "speed up" for all western Balkan nations, without sacrificing the requirement for ICTY cooperation from each.

18. (C) NOTE: PM Jansa and Croatian PM Sanader held a surprise Sunday meeting 6 March to discuss bilateral issues. The Slovene News Agency reported after the meeting, "Sanadar acquainted Jansa with Croatia's efforts to cooperate with the ICTY...Jansa said he hoped the new assurances and proof presented by Croatia to the EU would be taken into account when Croatia's European prospects are considered." END NOTE.

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EU  
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19. (SBU) Adanja indicated that full entry into Schengen was very important to Slovenia and it is doing everything possible to meet its goal of late 2006 implementation. She acknowledged that autumn 2007 is a more likely date given what she termed to be "delays" in Brussels on full Schengen implementation in new member states. In reply to a Garvey question, Adanja said she expects Slovenia to have a "special arrangement" with Croatia to ensure smooth cross-border travel. With regard to adoption of the Euro, Adanja confirmed that Slovenia appears on track for an early 2007 transition with the only remaining concern centering around domestic inflation rates. A top current priority for Adanja and her team are the negotiations on the EU financial perspective. Slovenia is very close to the line between donor and recipient countries in the EU context and domestic political pressure to remain recipient status is strong.

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OSCE (AND THE RUSSIANS)  
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10. (C) OSCE TF Chair Frlec provided Garvey an overview of Slovenia's OSCE priorities, including reaching an agreement on the budget/scales of assessment, working with the Russians, coordinating the work of the Eminent Persons panel, and getting the most out of the OSCE's "flexibility" and its 17 field missions.

11. (C) Frlec described the current impasse with the Russians as being "deeply political" in nature. "It comes

from Putin." Frlec said his team is seeking to listen to the Russians and find ways to bridge concerns. "Slovenia is in a position to get results. They (the Russians) like us and are sorry we have to deal with these problems." He said that one particular irritant for Russia is that it sees itself as a partner when dealing with the EU, NATO and the Council of Europe but senses that in the OSCE the participating states all agree and "then provide them an ultimatum." Frlec senses a slight "softening" in Moscow's attitude and approach after the President's meeting with President Putin in Bratislava. He said FM Lavrov's recent letter on scales of assessment, while "still not acceptable," did show some movement. FM/Cio Rupel would like to move forward on Russian proposals for conferences on military doctrines and energy security. Rupel will seek to get Secretary Rice's concurrence for these conferences during their meeting in Washington. Garvey stressed to Frlec the importance of "speaking with one voice" to the Russians.

12. (C) Earlier, Logar had expressed his own frustrations with the Russians, acknowledging that Slovenia needed to get them on board in the OSCE, but also opining that Putin and his "circle" are "former KGB" and their mentality and outlook "haven't really changed." Logar says he senses strongly that the Russian MFA is not making the key decisions on OSCE or other key matters, but rather Putin's inner circle is in charge. He said the Russians know that "what happened in Georgia and Ukraine could happen in Moldova next" and this exacerbates the reactions from Moscow.

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GETTING JANSA TO WASHINGTON  
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13. (C) Logar, Adanja, Rahten, Vajgl and Gabric all commented very positively on the President's recent trip to Europe and the opportunities it provides for the U.S./European relationship. Rahten called it a "good, impressive sign" and was glad to see the optimistic message that came out of the meetings, especially in Brussels. He added that Slovenia "supports the U.S. mission to enlarge democracy" in the Middle East.

14. (C) All senior interlocutors (in lockstep) delivered one other important message: please help us get a meeting for PM Jansa with President Bush this fall. The Prime Minister hopes to travel to Washington for a series of meetings and appearances. Logar stressed how much the new Slovene government wants to be a "credible, strategic partner" of the U.S. and pointed to Slovenia's support of recent NATO and EU decisions regarding support to Iraq. He added that "Slovenia will support and be active in efforts on Iraq."  
ROBERTSON

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